

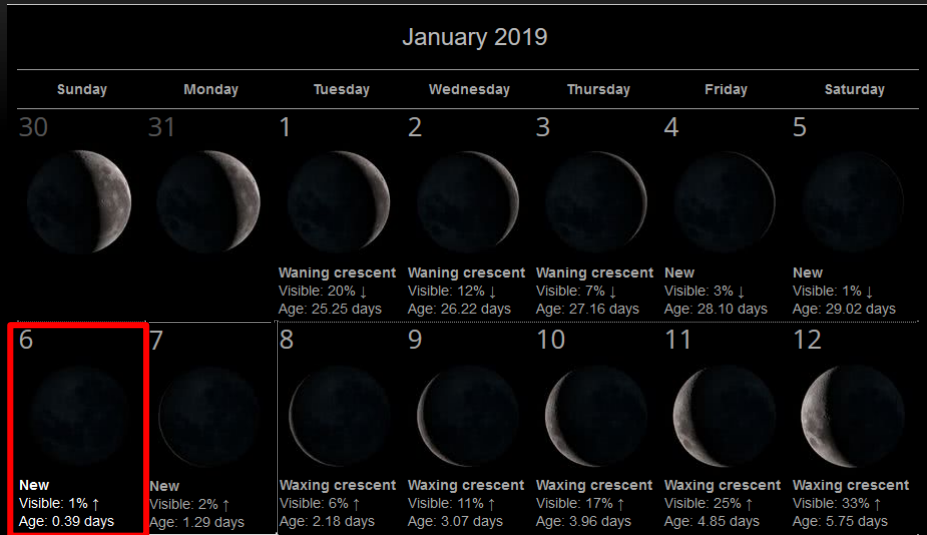
BAS - MONTHLY SKY GUIDE

January 2019



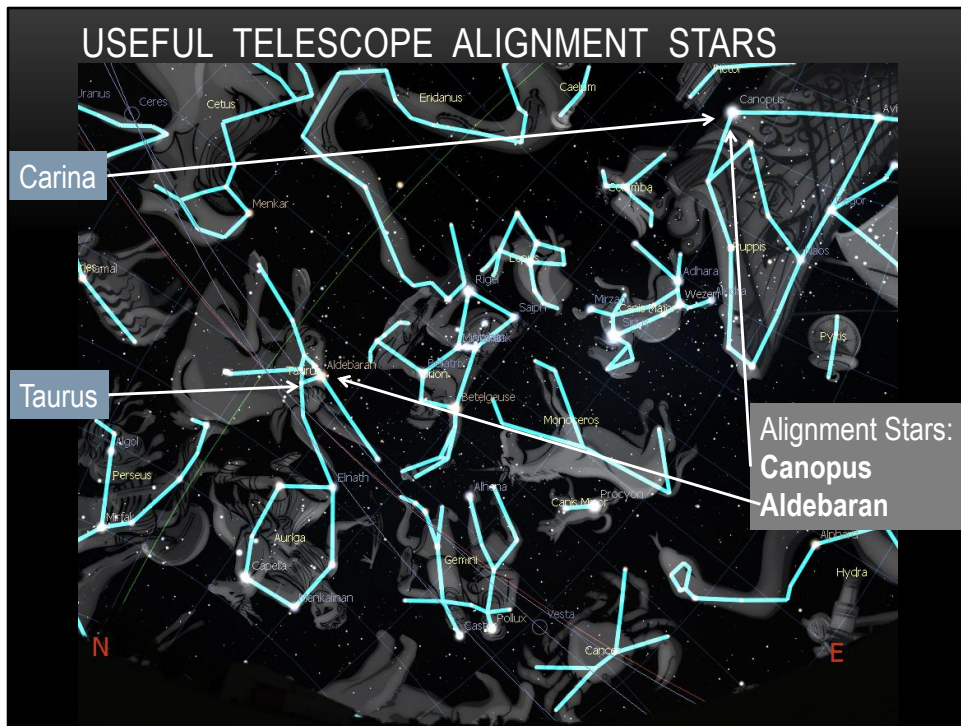
January is often a challenging month for Brisbane astronomers as clouds and storms are common and finding a clear night is a rare event. However, some interesting regions of the sky pass over us this month, so it is worth a try. For example, this is a great time to observe the Great Orion Nebula and the two Magellanic Clouds.

DARK SKY – BEST OBSERVING DATES - JANUARY



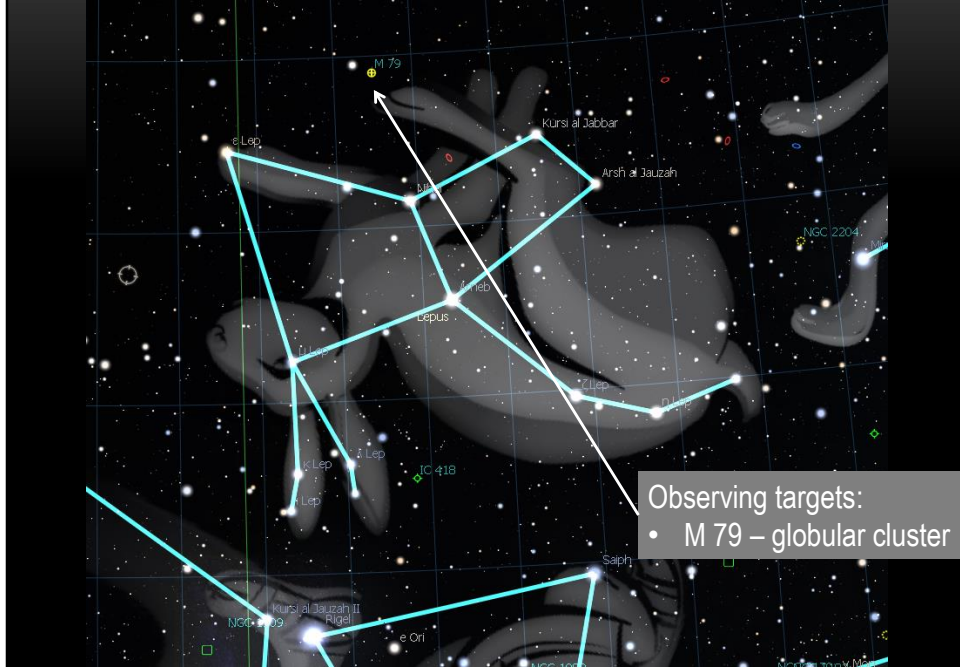
Best: December 30th to January 8th

New Moon is Sunday January 6th. A full evening of observing from sunset through to about midnight can be achieved for about a week prior to the New Moon. So plan your observing dates from about December 30th onwards. The slim waxing crescent of the early New Moon set around the end of astronomical twilight on January 8th so the first few days after the January 6th New Moon are also uninterrupted by the Moon. However, after the 8th you may need to waste some early evening observing time waiting for the Moon to set and deliver a dark sky. So make good use of the period around December 30th to January 8th.

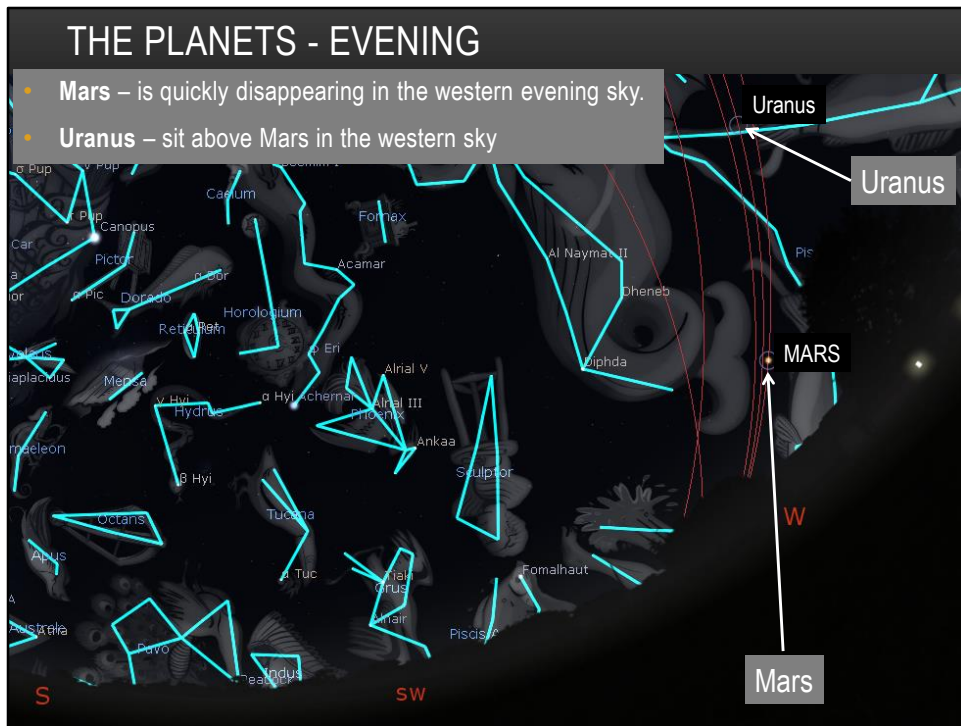


Two prominent and widely spaced stars that are good for telescope alignment are Aldebaran in the constellation Taurus, the Bull, located on the ecliptic, and bright Canopus in the constellation Carina. Aldebaran is a great alignment star as it is bright and distinctly orange and so difficult to confuse with other stars in the eyepiece. Similarly, Canopus is also very bright, the second brightest of all stars in the sky after Sirius, and also easy to distinguish in the eyepiece.

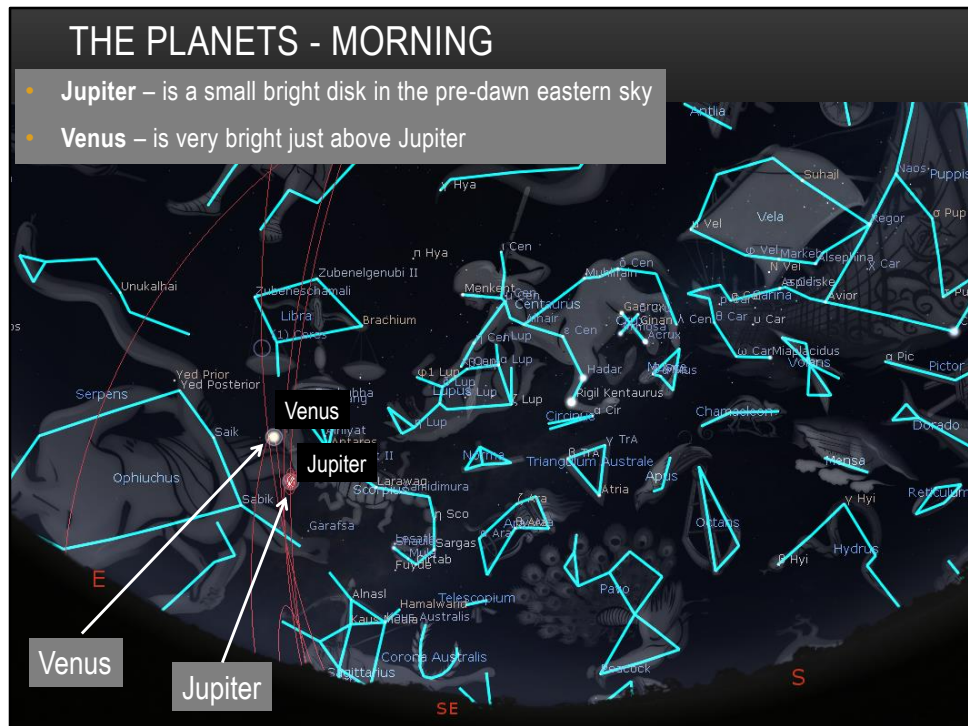
CONSTELLATION OF THE MONTH - LEPUS



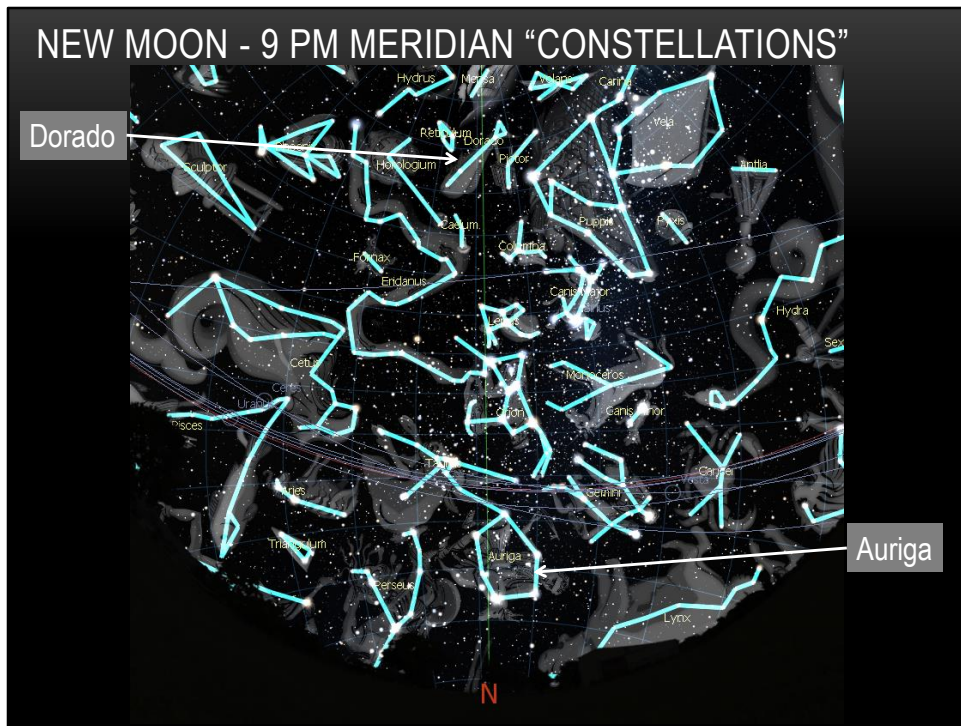
The constellation Lepus, the Hare, was defined in star maps by ancient Greek astronomer Ptolemy in around 100 AD. The Hare lies at the foot of Orion “The Hunter” and within reach of his hunting dog Canis Major. There are not a lot of great observing targets in Lepus however globular cluster M79, located 42,000 light years away is worth seeking out.



January, like all the early months of 2019, is not a great month for observing planets. In the evening sky we will have tiny Mars rapidly heading for the horizon in the early evening. However, at this point of its orbit of the Sun it will be too distant from Earth to deliver good observing. Uranus, also rather distant, presents as a tiny blue dot in most telescopes.

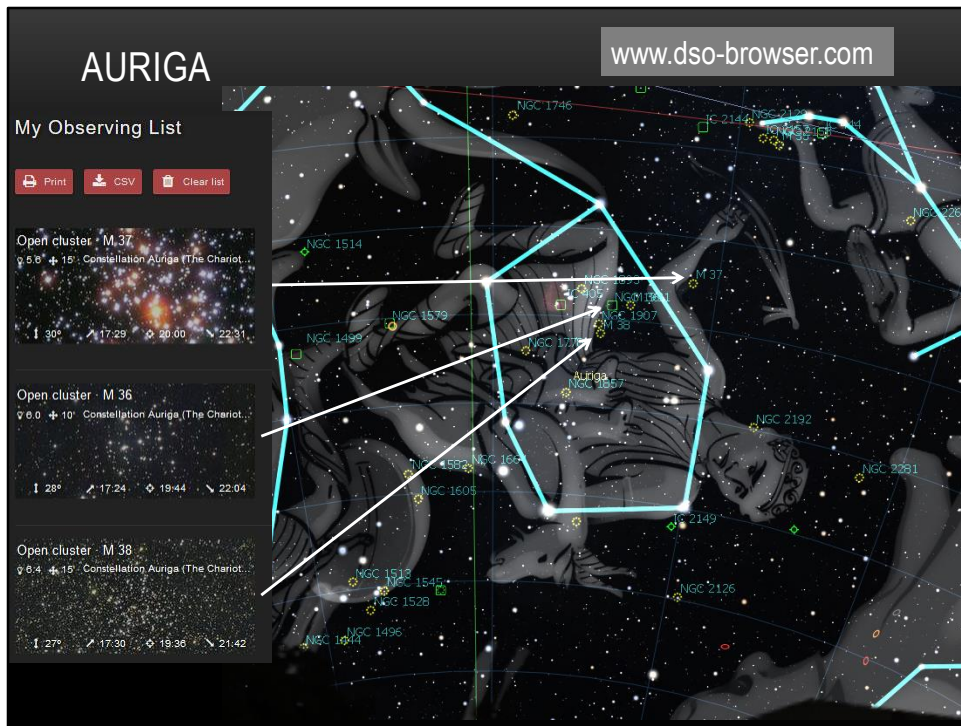


For the early risers, or all-nighter observers, we will have Venus and Jupiter rising in the pre-dawn eastern sky. Jupiter is also at a distant point of its orbit but the Galilean Moons will still be visible orbiting the planet.

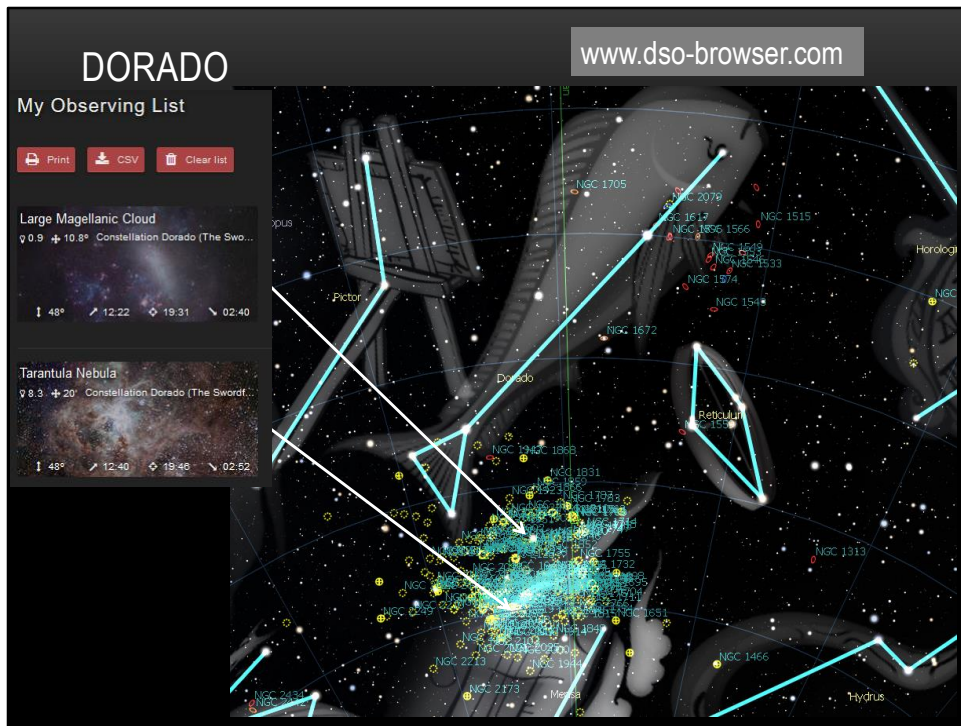


Auriga, “The Charioteer”, was one of the earliest constellations defined by the ancients Greeks and even earlier civilisations. The star alignment in the constellation is said to depict a man holding the reins to a chariot in his right hand and two young goats in his left arm. However some interpretations vary significantly. There are many myths regarding its origin. Some suggest it represents the first creation of a horse-drawn wheeled transport device by the Greek god of blacksmiths and craftsmen who suffering leg and mobility problems due to old age.

Dorado is one of 12 new constellations added to modern star maps around 1595 by Dutch astronomer Pieter Dirkszoon Keyer following new discovering of countries, plants and animals by Dutch seafaring explorers. Dorado translates to the Dolphinfish in Spanish.



Auriga has three star clusters discovered by Charles Messier in the 18th century. Messier 36 is a large open cluster of about 60 stars. Messier 37 is another beautiful open cluster and Messier 38 is yet another cluster that is slightly fainter. All are worth seeking out in a low to moderate power eyepiece.



Most observers searching this region of the sky typically, and understandably, turn their telescope straight to the Large Magellanic Cloud and its host of nebulae and star clusters. The most impressive target is NGC 2070, the Tarantula Nebula. However within the asterism of the Dorado fish itself there are many galaxies 20 to 50 million light years distant that are within range of amateur telescopes.

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THIRD QUARTER
23:20 11:20

New Moon: in 9 days (Saturday 28)
Full Moon: in 23 days (Saturday 11)

Sun, Moon & Planets Information

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Find Objects

Object Type

Select none

- ☐ Asterism
- ☒ Bright nebula
- ☒ Dark nebula
- ☒ Diffuse nebula
- ☒ Galaxy
- ☒ Galaxy cluster
- ☒ Globular cluster
- ☒ Open cluster
- ☒ Planetary nebula
- ☐ Quasar
- ☐ Supernova remnant

Minimum Elevation

Apparent Magnitude

Apparent Size

Surface Brightness

Catalogues

Coordinates

Constellation

Dorado (The Swordfish)

Local time

Reset filters Search

My Observing List (0)

306 results

Print CSV

Large Magellanic Cloud
7 8.9 + 10.8° Constellation Dorado (The Swo...

Tarantula Nebula
7 8.3 + 20° Constellation Dorado (The Swo...

Bright nebula
7 8.5 + 13° Constellation Dorado (The Swo...

Bright nebula : NGC 1966 / NGC 1962
7 8.5 + 13° Constellation Dorado (The Swo...

Click Find Objects

Select object types

Select constellation

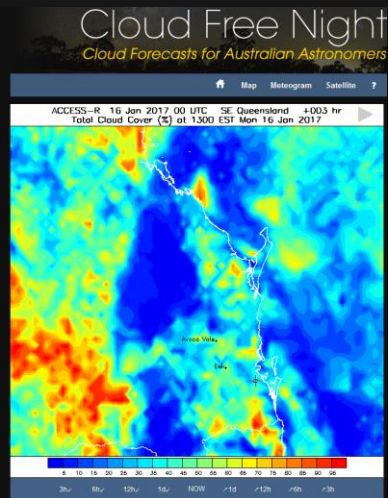
Search

<https://dso-browser.com/>

Make sure you take a look at the great observation planning tool DSO-Browser before the New Moon period. This is a fantastic tool to help you build a list of objects you can try and find each month.

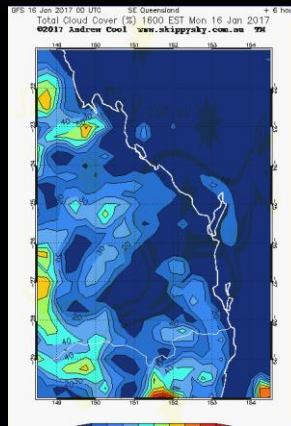
Just a few clicks on [www.dso-browser.com](https://dso-browser.com/) can generate a fantastic observing list of object types you are interested in.

AVOIDING CLOUDS
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More info: <http://philhart.com/content/cloud-forecasts-australian-astronomers>

www.skippysky.com



And to find the best cloud-free evenings for observing make sure you check CloudFreeNight and Skippysky as you plan your next observing evening.